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119 East 74th Street New York City 10021

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Statement and Resolution of the Vestry approved at a Meeting held on April 19, 1977.

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Three matters that have come to the notice of the Vestry in recent months draw into grave question the sense of responsibility of the Diocese of New York and of the national Episcopal Church in the exercise of their respective functions.

I

The vote of General Convention on 16 September 1976 authorizing the ordination of women to the priesthood and to the episcopate. This action of General Convention, and the several ordinations of women to the priesthood that have occurred since its effective date, defy our Lord's example and abandon nearly two thousand years of unbroken Catholic faith and practice. The burden of justifying so grave a departure rested on the proponents thereof. This burden they never sustained. Instead, they attempted to shift to the defenders of Dominical example and Catholic practice the burden of justifying their position, by asserting that no theological objection to women's ordination could be found, and by saying that our Lord chose only men as apostles because He felt constrained to conform to the social mores of his age. The baselessness of the latter assertion is evident: Judaism was virtually unique among the religions of the ancient world in having no priestesses. The pagan world was full of them. By refraining from calling any of his women followers to apostleship, Christ aligned Himself against the prevailing spirit of his age. By authorizing priestesses, General Convention has embraced the ethos of paganism, both ancient and modern.

II

The actions of the Standing Committee and the Diocesan of New York, in accepting a candidate for ordination to the priesthood who had informed them that she is a Lesbian, and the subsequent ordination of this candidate.

III

Actions both of the Diocese of New York and of the national Episcopal Church in respect of the latter's proper role in cooperating with the Manhattan Federal grand jury investigating bombings for which responsibility has been claimed by a tiny group of advocates of Puerto Rican independence (las Fuerzas Armadas de Liberacion Nacional Puertorriquena, known as F.A.L.N.)

The only person thus far identified as a member of this group was also, until recently, a member of the Commission on Hispanic Affairs of the national Episcopal Church: Carlos Alberto Torres. Following the discovery by the police of a bomb factory in his Chicago apartment, he has become a fugitive from justice.

/Executives ...

Executives of the national Church, Presiding Bishop Allin and Bishop Wood, have themselves cooperated with the Federal investigation. On the other hand, two functionaries of the Hispanic Affairs Commission, Maria Cueto and Raisa Nemikin, have been jailed for contempt because of their refusal to answer questions before the grand jury even though they have both been given immunity from prosecution.

The national Church leadership does not endorse the stand of Miss Cueto and Miss Nemikin, but it does lend its support: (1) By paying the fees and expenses of the lawyers for the two; and (2) by placing them on leave of absence during their continued imprisonment.

Nevertheless, if the national Church must be criticized for supporting the lawless defiance of the judicial process by these two Church employees, the attitude and the actions of the Diocesan of New York in their behalf are even more reprehensible. He sent his lawyers into Federal Court in an attempt to quash the Federal subpoenas, and those lawyers criticized Bishops Allin and Wood for cooperating with the investigation, castigating them as "naive." When the court rejected as inadmissible this effort by the Diocesan of New York to intervene in a matter that did not concern him, he decided not to appeal, but has continued to advocate from the sidelines the irresponsible cause of these two Church employees. It is incomprehensible to the Vestry that any Christian leader would condone the refusal of any citizen, let alone a Church employee, to tell a Federal grand jury, under oath, what he or she knows about the whereabouts of a fugitive from justice who, allegedly, is deeply implicated with a band of terrorists who already have killed four people.

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After reflection and prayer, this Vestry has re-thought its own responsibilities as trustees and stewards of the temporalities of this parish. We have concluded that we cannot, in good conscience, continue to pay a diocesan assessment (part of which is turned over by the Diocese to the national Church) which will be used, even in part, to provide further funds for misuse by Church officials who have demeaned themselves and debased their offices to the extent above described. This Vestry is keenly conscious of the need for outreach by this parish and is convinced that it can choose its missionary objectives with far greater sensitivity to Christian Faith and Witness than can the Diocesan and national officers. This we intend to do.

After consideration of the foregoing, on Motion duly made, seconded and adopted, it was

RESOLVED, that the payment of the Diocesan Assessment of this parish be discontinued indefinitely, and it was further

RESOLVED, that this Vestry hereby states its intention to dedicate from its assets, funds in an amount equivalent to its Diocesan Assessment and to use such funds to assist missionary objectives which it deems worthy and appropriate.

Norman P. Lunn (Warden) Capitol Church
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